

**Land at Redlands  
Highworth  
Wiltshire**  
*Archaeological Evaluation*



for  
David Hares Landscape Architecture

CA Project: 6489  
CA Report: 18021

February 2018



# Land at Redlands Highworth Wiltshire

## Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: 6849  
CA Report: 18021



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Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)

Fig. 2 Trench location plan showing archaeological features, cropmarks and geophysical survey results (1:2000)

## SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Land at Redlands  
**Location:** Highworth, Wiltshire  
**NGR:** 420008 191788  
**Type:** Evaluation  
**Date:** 8 -10 January 2018  
**Location of Archive:** To be deposited with Wiltshire Museum  
**Site Code:** RSRH18

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in January 2018 on Land at Redlands, Highworth, Wiltshire. A total of eight trenches were excavated.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were identified during the course of the evaluation.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In January 2018 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for David Hares Landscape Architecture on land at Redlands, Highworth, Wiltshire (centred at NGR: 420008, 191788; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken to accompany a planning application (ref: RS/OUT/17/1340) made to Swindon Borough Council (SBC), for the development of 70 residential units and associated infrastructure.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2018) and approved by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger (County Archaeologist, Wiltshire Council), the archaeological advisor to SBC. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014), the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991), the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (English Heritage 2006) and any other relevant standards or guidance contained within Appendix B.

### ***The site***

- 1.3 The proposed development area (hereafter 'the site') is located on the southern outskirts of Highworth. It is approximately 4.3ha in extent, comprising two irregular shaped fields currently occupied by grassland. The site lies at c.120m above ordnance datum (AOD) in the south, rising to c.125 AOD to the north. The site is bounded to the north by residential properties, Redlands House and associated land and outbuildings to the south. The A361 road forms the western boundary and to the east are open fields.
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Stanford Formation – Limestone of the Jurassic Period, with no recorded superficial deposits (BGS 2017). The natural substrate identified in all of the excavated trenches comprised a light orangey brown sandy clay matrix. Occasional outcrops of horizontally bedded limestone and brown gravelly silty sand were also noted.

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site has been subject to Heritage Desk-Based Assessment (CA 2017), the results of which are summarised below.
- 2.2 No prehistoric activity is recorded within the site, however it is noted in the wider landscape. Approximately 870m to the north-east of the site a range of worked flints were identified. Bronze Age and Iron Age activity is centred around Hampton Hill, c.810m north-west of the site, where pits, postholes and cremations have been identified.
- 2.3 No Roman activity is recorded within the site, however this period is well represented in Highworth. A possible area of Roman settlement is located c.750m north-east of the site, which includes four stone buildings linked by trackways. Roman burials are known c.530m to the north-west and c.665m to the north-west of the site. A watching brief at 39 Cricklade Road, located c.510 north-west of the site, identified a pyre burial and a section of wall in association with Roman ceramics and other finds (Winterburn 2008). At the Highworth Junior Football Club, located c.305m north-west of the site, a watching brief and excavation revealed the truncated remains of a 4th century building (Rowe & Bateman 2004).
- 2.4 Artefacts of Saxon date are known from the Highworth area, and the remains of a sunken featured building are known as a result of excavations at Priory Green (c.700m north-east of the site). The settlement at Highworth is first recorded in the Domesday Book (1086), when it is described as a small settlement with meadow land, plough land, one church and associated church lands.
- 2.5 The core of the medieval settlement of Highworth is recorded c.430m north of the site. The settlement would have likely comprised a rural village, surrounded by agricultural land and other small settlements.
- 2.6 The land surrounding Highworth was enclosed between 1778 and 1783. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries the town grew slowly, which resulted in the preservation of the medieval layout of the centre of the town. A small number of the town's medieval buildings survive, although many of the houses were re-fronted during the 18th and early 19th centuries.

- 2.7 The geophysical survey of the site identified two anomalies of potential archaeological interest, comprising a ditch and possible enclosure. Further anomalies suggestive of agricultural activity such as ridge and furrow were also noted (SUMO 2017).

### 3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the evaluation were to provide information about the archaeological resource within the current site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality. In accordance with *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014), the evaluation has been designed to be minimally intrusive and minimally destructive to archaeological remains. The information gathered will enable SBC to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it, and to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

### 4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of 8 trenches (each measuring 25m in length and 1.8m in width), in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual*.
- 4.2 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.3 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: *The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*: no deposits were identified that required



sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.

- 4.4 The archive from the evaluation is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the site archive will be deposited with Wiltshire Museum. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

## 5. RESULTS (FIG. 2)

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are to be found in Appendix A.
- 5.2 All the excavated trenches exposed a broadly similar stratigraphy. The natural geological substrate, consisting of a light orangey brown sandy clay matrix (with outcrops of horizontally bedded limestone and brown gravelly silty sand), was exposed in all of the trenches at a typical depth of 0.5m below the present ground level. The natural substrate was sealed by a sandy silt subsoil, of 0.30m in thickness. This was overlain by a silty clay topsoil and turf, of 0.30m in thickness.
- 5.3 Trenches 4 and 5 revealed a thin layer of charcoal just below the topsoil, which correlated with a geophysical anomaly in this location. Modern, irregular post-hole 804 was observed in Trench 8, from which ironworking slag was recovered but not retained. The majority of the remaining geophysical anomalies correlated with modern land drains.

## 6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 In spite of the archaeological potential of the site, no archaeological features were recorded. All targeted geophysical anomalies were determined to either be of modern origin, or variations in geology.
- 6.2 The absence of archaeological deposits (and any pre-modern artefacts), in conjunction with the wide range of modern features and deposits, suggest that archaeological assets are likely to have been removed during previous site activities.



## 8. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Marino Cardelli, assisted by Gary Baddeley and David Humphreys. The report was written by Marino Cardelli. The illustrations were prepared by Charlotte Patman. The archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Ian Barnes.

## 9. REFERENCES

- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2016 *Geology of Britain Viewer*  
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed 11 January 2018
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2017 *Redlands, Highworth, Wiltshire; Heritage Desk Based Assessment* Typescript Report **16713**
- CA 2018 *Redlands Highworth Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation* CA project **6489**
- DCLG (Department of Communities and Local Government) 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*
- Row, M. & Bateman, C. 2004 *Highworth JFC, Highworth, Wiltshire*, Cotswold Archaeology
- SUMO 2017 *Redlands Park, Highworth Wiltshire; Geophysical Survey Report* Typescript Report **11822**
- Winterburn, J. 2008 *Report on the findings of an archaeological watching brief at Northcot, 39 Cricklade Road, Highworth, Wiltshire*, JW Archaeology Services

## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Spot-date
1	100	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown sandy silt, friable with occasional flecks of charcoal and sub-angular stone, frequent roots and distinct turf layer.	25	>1.8	0.29	modern
1	101	Layer		Subsoil	Light orangey brown silty clay, friable with occasional sub-angular stone.	25	>1.8	0.29	
1	102	Layer		Natural	Natural substrate of mid brown orange silty clay, plastic.	25	>1.8	0.58	
2	200	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown sandy silt, friable with occasional flecks of charcoal and sub-angular stone, frequent roots and distinct turf layer.	25	>1.8	0.26	modern
2	201	Layer		Subsoil	Mid light brown silty clay with occasional sub-angular stone.	25	>1.8	0.19	
2	202	Layer		Natural	Natural substrate of light yellowish brown silty clay	25	>1.8	0.45	
2	203	Cut		Pit	Irregular potential pit, flat based possibly related to nearby field drain	0.50	0.45	0.07	
2	204	Fill	203	Backfill	Mid greyish brown silty clay mixed with burnt material and occasional red sandy patches	0.50	0.45	0.07	
3	300	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown sandy silt, friable with occasional flecks of charcoal and sub-angular stone, frequent roots and distinct turf layer.	25	>1.8	0.29	
3	301	Layer		Subsoil	Light orangey brown silty clay, friable with occasional sub-angular stone	25	>1.8	0.30	
3	302	Layer		Natural	Natural substrate of mid brown orange silty clay, plastic.	25	>1.8	0.67	
4	400	Layer		Topsoil	Topsoil made up of a turf layer, dark greyish brown sandy silt, friable with occasional sub-angular stone	25	>1.8	0.31	
4	401	Layer		Subsoil	Only seen at the W end of the trench, light brown orange sandy silt, friable and frequent sub-angular stone	25	>1.8	0.15	
4	402	Layer		Natural	Light brown orange clay sand with patches of bedrock	25	>1.8	0.50	
4	403	Cut		Posthole	Modern circular posthole	0.37 Diam			
4	404	Fill	403	Fill	Wooden post in situ surrounded by light brown grey sandy clay	0.37 Diam			
5	500	Layer		Topsoil	Light brown grey sandy silt with a charcoal lens	25	>1.8	0.40	
5	501	Layer		Subsoil	Light orangey brown silty clay, friable with occasional sub-angular	25	>1.8	0.23	
5	502	Layer		Natural	Natural substrate of brown orange silty clay, plastic to friable	25	>1.8	0.71	
6	600	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brownish grey silty clay with frequent roots	25	>1.8	0.30	
6	601	Layer		Subsoil	Mid greyish brown silty clay and sand with occasional stone as inclusions	25	>1.8	0.48	
6	602	Layer		Natural	Mix of gravel, large sub-angular stone in light brown silty clay	25	>1.8	0.78	
6	603	Cut		Furrow	Cut of a shallow furrow running NE-SW	>1.8	1.62	0.19	
6	604	Fill	603	Fill	Light brown compact clay sand with occasional small stone. Rooting	>1.8	1.62	0.19	
7	700	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown grey silty clay with frequent roots	25	>1.8	0.25	
7	701	Layer		Subsoil	Mid orangey brown silty clay	25	>1.8	0.34	
7	702	Layer		Natural	Light brownish orange silty clay with large amount of gravel	25	>1.8	0.59	
8	800	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brown, almost black sandy silt, friable with occasional charcoal, sub-rounded	25	>1.8	0.30	

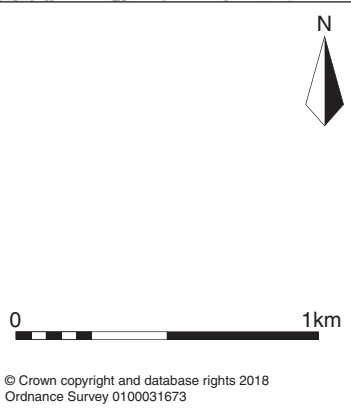
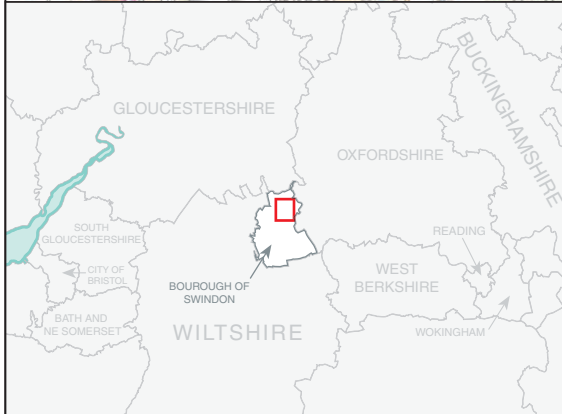
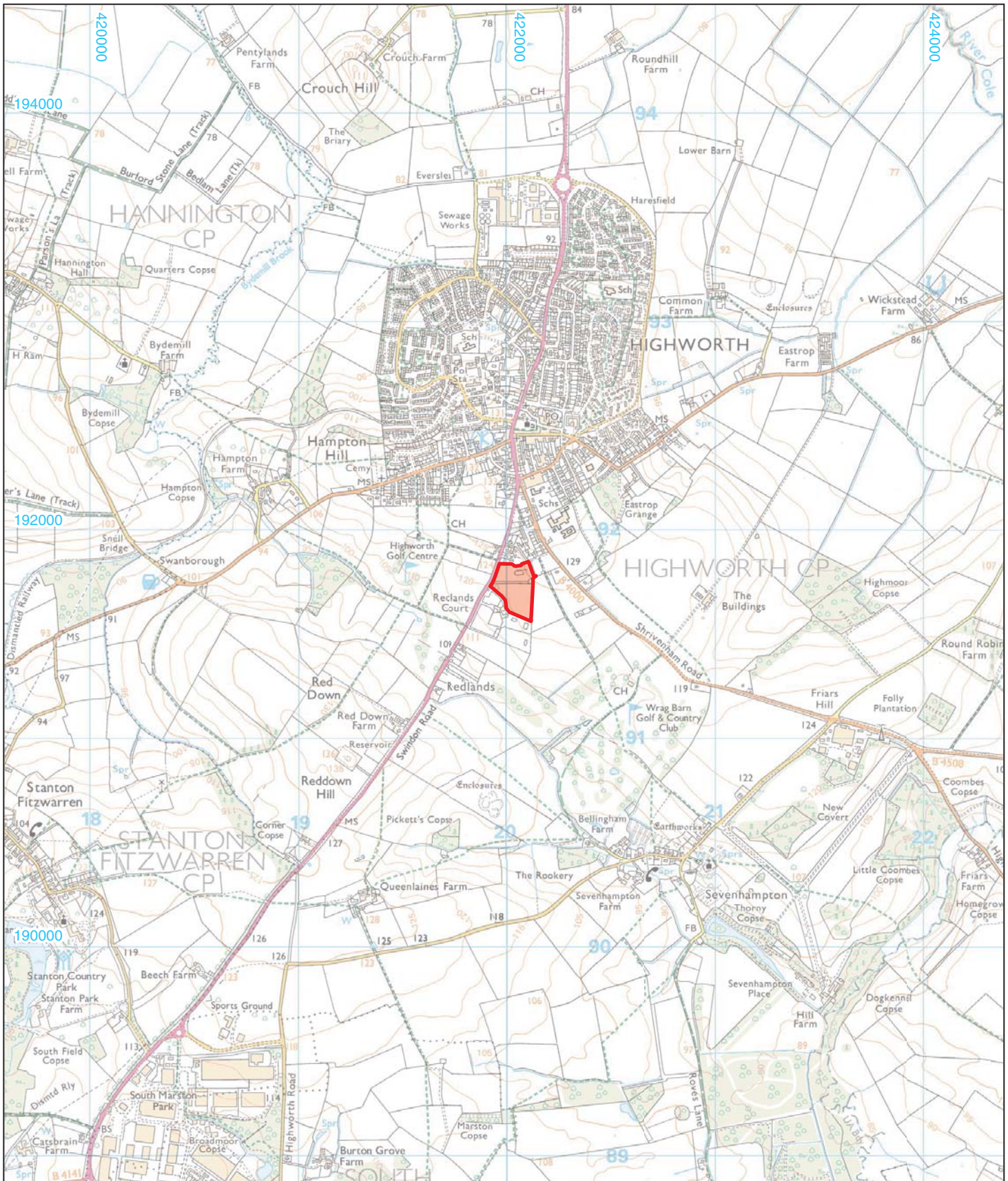
					stone fragments				
8	801	Layer		Levelling	Made ground levelling deposit between top and subsoil. Dark brown grey silty clay, friable with frequent charcoal	10	>1.8	0.12	
8	802	Layer		Subsoil	Light orangey brown silty sand, friable with occasional charcoal	25	>1.8	0.27	
8	803	Layer		Natural	Natural substrate of mid orangey yellow sandy clay, patches of light grey clay, friable	25	>1.8	0.65	
8	804	Cut		Posthole	Irregular circular posthole, concave vertical sides, flat base	0.46	0.40	0.53	
8	805	Fill	804	Fill	Fill of posthole 804, mixed light grey brown silty clay, loose with occasional fleck of charcoal	0.46	0.40	0.53	

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**APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	Land at Redlands, Highworth Wiltshire	
Short description	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in January 2018 on Land at Redlands, Highworth, Wiltshire. A total of eight trenches were excavated.  No features or deposits of archaeological interest were identified during the course of the evaluation.	
Project dates	8-10 January 2018	
Project type	Archaeological Evaluation	
Previous work		
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	Land at Redlands, Highworth Wiltshire	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)	4.3ha	
Site co-ordinates	420008 191788	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Ian Barnes	
Project Supervisor	Marino Cardelli	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>		
	none	
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>		
	none	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content
Physical		none
Paper		Archive, Context sheets, permatraces
Digital		Database, digital photos
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2018: <i>Land at Redlands, Highworth Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report <b>18021</b>		






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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Redlands, Highworth, Wiltshire

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site location plan

<b>DRAWN BY</b> CP	<b>PROJECT NO.</b> 6489	<b>FIGURE NO.</b>
<b>CHECKED BY</b> DJB	<b>DATE</b> 16/01/2018	<b>1</b>
<b>APPROVED BY</b> IB	<b>SCALE@A4</b> 1:25,000	

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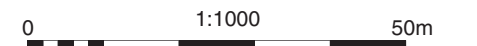




- Site boundary
- Evaluation trench
- GI pit location
- Buried service (3m buffer)
- excavated/unexcavated
- Furrow
- Field drain
- Modern
- Natural
- Treethrow
- Root protection area
- Badger sett location

**Geophysical Survey Results (SUMO 2017)**

- Possible archaeology (discrete/trend)
- Uncertain origin (discrete/trend)
- Uncertain origin (area of increased response)
- Agricultural - ridge and furrow or drainage
- Pipe
- Ferrous/magnetic disturbance



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**PROJECT TITLE**  
Redlands, Highworth, Wiltshire

**FIGURE TITLE**  
Trench location plan

<small>DRAWN BY</small> CP	<small>PROJECT NO.</small> 6489	<small>FIGURE NO.</small>
<small>CHECKED BY</small> DJB	<small>DATE</small> 15/01/2018	<b>2</b>
<small>APPROVED BY</small> IB	<small>SCALE@A3</small> 1:1,000	

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